The States|UTs also asked for higher allocation of Public Distribution System items from the Central Pool.

Constitution and functioning of Bachawat Wage Report

1312. SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) when the Bachawat Wage Board was constituted and the date of starting its functioning;

(b) when the study completed was and when the report was submitted to Government;

(c) what are the total expenses, under different heads of accounts, incurred by Government for this Board; and

(d) what was the reason for inordinate delay in submitting the report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI RADHAKRISHAN MALVIYA): (a) and (b) The Wage Boards for Working Journalists and Non-Journalist Emploees (Bachawat Wage Board) were constituted vide Notification dated 17th July, 1985. The Boards started functioning on 1st August, 1985 when the Chairman took over the Charge. They have submitted their report on 30th May, 1989.

(c) The expenditure under different heads is as under:—

Salary	22.94 lakhs
Office Expenses	12.32 lakhs
T.A.	12.55 lakhs
Wages	1.68 lakhs
Other Expenses	0.25 lakhs

(d) The Wage Boards had to make extensive studies and consultations before arriving at the conclusions/ recommendations.

Manufacture of sponge iron

1313. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether China has shown its interest in India's process for the manufacture of sponge iron;

(b) if so, the details of the recent talks held with China in this regard; and

(c) how Government propose to have ventures with China?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHANLAL FOTEDAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. During the visit of the Indian delegation to China recently, the Chinese did express their interest in the manufacture of sponge iron which is being promoted in India. It was informally indicated to them that, should they wish to do so, they could send a delegation to our country for a study tour. The issue is still in a very preliminary stage and there is no joint venture proposed with China at this stage.

Restructuring the Public Distribution System in the country

1314. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to restructure the Public Distribution System throughout the country to make it more effective and purposeful to meet the consumers' needs;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard so far by Government; and

(c) the details of commodities presently supplied by Government through the Public Distribution System?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) and (b) As a continual